

California (Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, in December of 2014, as leverage against the President's immigration executive order, the Republican leadership irresponsibly decided to hold hostage the 2015 funding for the Department of Homeland Security.

We are now 147 days in fiscal year 2015, just 4 days away from February 28, when the continuing resolution currently funding the Department will expire. The serious consequence of inaction by the Republican leadership is that it will leave the Department without the funds needed to effectively fulfill its mission of protecting our homeland.

It is unbelievable that given the urgency of our national security, House Republicans continue failing to put forward a realistic plan to fund the Department of Homeland Security.

Mistakenly, some Republicans believe the Department is doing just fine under the continuing resolution. Some even say it is okay to let DHS funding expire. Other Republicans suggest the preliminary Texas district court injunction, which blocks implementation of the President's executive action on immigration, is reason enough to continue holding hostage the funding for Homeland Security.

These are dangerously wrong conclusions. Secretary Johnson and agency heads have warned that if the CR is allowed to expire, national security operations will be disrupted, and essential personnel will be required to work without pay. They also warn passing another CR will not address the uncertainty of being able to meet our long-term national security needs.

Our national security cannot wait for the unrelated issue of the President's executive actions on immigration to work its way through the judicial process which, at best, is likely to take several months.

By contrast, Democrats have a responsible solution. Two weeks ago, Appropriations Committee Ranking Member NITA LOWEY and I introduced H.R. 861. It is a clean appropriations bill that funds the Department of Homeland Security for the remainder of fiscal year 2015. It is not a Democratic bill. If it were, it would more closely reflect Democratic priorities.

Rather, H.R. 861 contains the precise language of the November 2014 bipartisan bill negotiated in good faith by chairs and ranking members of the House and Senate Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittees.

This is the bill that was intended to be part of the 2015 omnibus legislation that funded the rest of the Federal Government. It is the bill that will enable the Department of Homeland Security to address our Nation's current and most pressing security needs.

I am pleased that H.R. 861 is sponsored by every Democrat in the House, and we urge our Republican colleagues to join us.

□ 1230

This bipartisan, bicameral bill will pass the House, pass the Senate, and be signed into law by the President. All it needs is for the Republican leadership to bring the bill to the floor for a vote.

Surely our Nation need not experience attacks like those in Paris and Copenhagen before we show our resolve to fund our Department of Homeland Security. Let us not wait around and hope Senate Republicans do the responsible thing.

House Republicans should lead by bringing H.R. 861 for a vote and making it clear to the American people that our Nation's security takes priority over political and unrelated policy debates. Failure to do so and letting funding for Homeland Security expire or taking the easy way out by kicking a viable solution down the road with a continuing resolution represents a failure in fulfilling our most basic responsibility as Members of Congress: to protect the American people and our country from harm.

Let's pass H.R. 861 today.

WILKES EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize a pioneering school in Wilkesboro, North Carolina.

Established in 2009, Wilkes Early College High School is a partnership between Wilkes County Schools and Wilkes Community College. The school provides a small learning community of students the opportunity to earn both a high school diploma and an associate degree. It is a 5-year school which enrolls approximately 60 ninth graders each year and is located on the campus of Wilkes Community College where students are enrolled in both honors-level high school classes and college courses.

The mission of Wilkes Early College High School is to provide a personalized program of study that will empower students to be lifelong, community-oriented learners who possess the technical and leadership skills needed for personal and professional success in a global community.

The \$40 annual fee, which covers textbooks and enrollment, is an extremely affordable way to help students reach their education goals, especially when you consider that the average tuition and fees was \$2,305 for a public 2-year institution in North Carolina this year and \$6,677 for a public 4-year institution. And those costs have increased 30 percent over the last 5 years.

Many of the students who attend Wilkes Early College High School are the first in their family to attend college. As a result, Principal Dion Stocks and his staff are working hard to out-

line expectations and guide students through the process of applying to a 4-year institution. Seminar classes are provided to assist students with understanding college expectations, the application process, and financial aid.

Last year, 21 students earned their associate degree in the school's first official graduating class, and 20 students are expected to earn their degree this year.

Wilkes Early College High School provides an advanced educational experience that equips students for success in college, career, and life. America needs more of this type of innovative learning.

FUNDING THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. TAKAI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. TAKAI. Mr. Speaker, today marks 4 days until the Department of Homeland Security runs out of money. We all had the opportunity for the first time this session to go back home last week for our district workweek, and I had an opportunity to speak about this particular issue at the Honolulu International Airport, where many of our DHS officials and employees are very concerned about this lapse of funding. Although some DHS employees would continue to work in the event of a shutdown, they would be forced to do so without pay, creating a significant distraction and dealing a significant blow to morale.

Every single House Democrat has co-sponsored clean legislation to fund DHS, and it is clear that there are a sufficient amount of votes to pass this bill now.

Keeping America's families safe is the first responsibility and priority of this Congress. We need to put aside the political gridlock that has plagued this House for too long and fund DHS now. An impasse in funding would close down the bulk of DHS' management and support of Homeland Security infrastructure that was built following the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Essential funding for the Department of Homeland Security is no place for grandstanding against immigration reform that strengthens our economy and our country. Let's remember: it was the inability of this House to act on the Senate's comprehensive immigration reform bill that forced the President to take executive action on immigration in the first place.

I came to Congress telling my constituents that I do not support government shutdowns, Federal furloughs, or sequestration, and now some in this body think they can fix this with further inaction, with further furloughs and further government shutdowns. I think not.

Let's pass a clean bill.

REMEMBERING WILLIE DAVIS
"BIG WILL" PRINGLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. DENHAM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DENHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor the life of a beloved community leader and friend from Victor Valley College. Willie Davis Pringle, also known as Big Will, was a beloved father, grandfather, brother, uncle, and coach. He died at the age of 62 on Tuesday, January 6, of this year.

Willie began his career at Victor Valley College, where he worked for 33 years. He was an active member of his community, and he advocated for students, the disabled, and the disadvantaged. While at VVC, Willie also met the woman and coworker who later became his wife, Mary.

Willie was a member of the Victor Valley Elementary School Board for 16 years. He assisted the disabled through job opportunities and benefits, served on the Hesperia Truancy Board, and was a member of the City of Victorville Advisory Board and Planning Commission. He also served as a member of the supervisory committee for the Victor Valley Federal Credit Union and was currently serving as president of the board of directors for Excelsior Charter School.

For many years, Willie would help serve meals to the homeless with the Salvation Army. Recently, he was recognized by the Los Angeles County Alliance, the California Alliance, and the National Alliance of Black School Educators for his service as a school board member. In 2009, Victor Valley Community College presented him with the Distinguished Service Award.

Willie was a lot more than that to many of us students. In the 33 years that he spent there, he was a friend; he was a mentor; he would talk to you as you walked through the campus; he would recognize if you weren't in class that day. Many times, he would seek you out in the community to make sure that you were staying out of trouble. This mentor meant so much to so many of us, and he is going to be sorely missed.

In December, Victor Valley College officials hosted a dedication ceremony in honor of the 33-year college employee, naming the college's athletic training room after him. Pringle served as the Rams' head football coach and athletic director, and he later became the director of student services before retiring.

He gave a lot of advice to many of us, encouraging us to seek out other opportunities. For me, I became student body president. And we had many other football players that followed in those same footsteps, at Willie's request. He kept us busy. He mentored us. He got us involved and engaged.

Madam Speaker, please join me in honoring and recognizing Willie Davis Pringle for his unwavering leadership

and many accomplishments and contributions.

THE DHS EMPLOYEE
RETROACTIVE PAY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BEYER. Madam Speaker, in 3 short days, absent congressional action, funding for the Department of Homeland Security will lapse and the Department will be forced to shut down. Should this be allowed, the vast majority of the DHS workforce will be required to work without pay until a funding agreement is reached. The remainder—more than 30,000 dedicated individuals—will be furloughed with no guarantee of backpay.

Congress must act immediately to enact legislation that would fully fund the Department and allow these men and women who live and work in every district in every State to continue to carry out the critical message of keeping our Nation healthy, safe, and strong.

But in the absence of such action, with time running dangerously short, DHS employees, at the very least, must be assured that there is an agreement in Congress that they will receive their full pay in a fair and timely manner. That is why I, along with my friend and colleague from Virginia (Mr. WITTMAN), have introduced the DHS Employee Retroactive Pay Fairness Act. This bipartisan proposal ensures that all Federal DHS employees receive retroactive pay for the duration of any shutdown, regardless of furlough status.

Madam Speaker, as we wait for Congress to do its job, we should not stop the men and women of DHS from doing theirs. We must guarantee they receive pay and that they not become collateral damage of Congress' refusal to reach an agreement.

RADICAL ISLAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALKER. Madam Speaker, in traveling throughout the district this past week, people shared with me their frustration at the ambiguous language from this administration in describing the evils of radical Islamist terrorism.

Though I greatly respect the office of the President, I too have grown weary at the timidity. While other world leaders have come to the forefront, our President continues to be defensive, at best.

At first glance, the silence appears to be passive or poor leadership. But I am inclined to believe that the President's posture is not one of weakness but, rather, an intentional directive in both rhetoric and action. It appears that his promise to take our country in a fundamentally new direction is being

played out in realtime. Instead of defending our liberty and our way of life, which is the most charitable in the world, our President seems to scoff at the belief that our country has been uniquely blessed by God.

I would be remiss today if I did not pause and remember our Egyptian Christian brothers in the recent barbaric attacks in Libya. ISIS murdered innocent husbands and fathers who clearly died for their faith and their beliefs.

Just this morning, we hear further reports out of Syria that Islamic State militants have abducted dozens of Christians, including women and children. Weeks prior, the President chastised the Christian community for getting on their judgmental high horses. Yet, in describing our martyred brothers from Egypt, the President refused to even utter the word, "Christian."

The undermining of our beliefs has become an issue with this President. This very week, we face a constitutional crisis that was created solely by this administration. House Republicans have passed legislation to fully fund the Department of Homeland Security, yet this President is now asking me and my colleagues to do something that, for 6 years and on more than 20 occasions, he said was outside the law.

Throughout history, strong leaders have exhibited strength in times of crises. Recently, Tony Blair met with a few of us and gave a great speech on the concerns and the ills of extreme terrorism. He said this, and I haven't forgotten it. He said: America, it is not your job to be loved; it is your job to lead.

Today, I beseech the President to lead by clearly defining this expanding extremism that is ISIS, al Qaeda, Boko Haram, al Shabaab, and other radical Islamic fundamentalists.

□ 1245

There are times when riding the high horse of justice is our only option. The American people are demanding strength. It is time to speak out. Defend our inalienable rights of liberty and life, be courageous, be a leader, Mr. President. The world is watching.

MIRACLE ON ICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. STEFANIK) for 5 minutes.

Ms. STEFANIK. "Do you believe in miracles?"

Madam Speaker, these were the iconic words uttered by legendary sportscaster Al Michaels with just 3 seconds left in the historic match between Team USA and the Soviet national hockey team in the 1980 Winter Olympics in Lake Placid. With the eyes of the world on the Lake Placid games, through sheer grit and determination, an amateur Team USA proudly did what many thought would be impossible by defeating the favored Soviet team.